

The University of Chicago

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AND ETIENNE MARCEL

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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BETWEEN 1355 and 1360 a series of revolts provoked by the maladministration of the Valois monarchs and aggravated by the capture of John II after the defeat at Poitiers threatened the structure of the French government. The individual most frequently regarded as the instigator of these revolts is Etienne Marcel, a Parisian dealer in cloth who, as provost of the merchants, headed the rebellious citizenry of Paris until his death in 1358. There is no denying that Marcel was an outstanding leader in the Parisian uprising; but the question may be raised whether the entire revolt, including as it did a significant reform movement in the central assemblies of the Estates and civil war on the part of certain feudal factions, was not broader in extent than the local uprising headed by the Parisian provost. The reforms that were advocated, the tangled political intrigues, the complicated relationships with England and the Empire and the Papacy, the theory of governmental administration put forward — all these point toward the leadership of a man with other qualifications than those possessed by Etienne Marcel.

It is generally recognized that Marcel, during his short public life (1355–1358), became closely associated with Robert le Coq, bishop of Laon, who admittedly was one of the leading spirits in the central assemblies of 1356 and 1357. Le Coq's career has been too frequently passed over by the historians dealing with this period, and his part in the reform movement appears never to have received an assessment at all commensurate with its importance. Because Marcel's activity is so well documented by the Parisian chroniclers, there has been a tendency to stress his participation and to lose sight of the fact that the movement was not restricted to the city of Paris.

Etienne Marcel was purely Parisian in his outlook. The descendant of a well-established family of Parisian merchants, he married into a Parisian family.¹ Although he imported cloth from Brussels and Flanders, and frequently sold to the royal court,² yet his business was centered in the city of Paris. His career was more commercial than political. True, he was a member of several politically-minded confraternities,³ but he did not hold public office until 1355, when he was elected provost of the merchants.⁴ Robert le Coq, on the other hand, possessed

¹ *Vie de St.-Louis*, ed. Natalie de Wailly (Paris, 1888), p. 129. See A. Longnon, Introduction to *Obituaires de la province de Sens*, ed. A. Molinier (Paris, 1902), I, xxxiv–xxxv. See also Henri Fremaux, 'La famille d'Etienne Marcel,' *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris*, xxx (1903), 178–179. The monograph by Fremaux is a most detailed and careful collection of practically all available information on the Marcel family; it corrects the extremely faulty genealogical discussion in F. T. Perrens, *Etienne Marcel, prévôt des marchands, 1354–1358* (2d ed.; Paris, 1874), pp. 36–37.

² One of the few extant records of court purchases is the 'Compte de l'argenterie' of Etienne de la Fontaine for the term Feb. 4, 1352 to July 1, 1352 (ed. Douët d'Arcq, *Comptes de l'argenterie* [Paris, 1851], pp. 80–157). There are some thirteen references to cloth provided by Marcel.

³ Le Roux de Lincy, 'Recherches sur la grand confrérie Notre-Dame aux prêtres et bourgeois de la ville de Paris,' *Mémoires de la Société royale des antiquaires de France*, xvii (1844), 200–313.

⁴ *Grandes Chroniques de France: chronique des règnes de Jean II et de Charles V*, ed. R. Delachenal (Paris, 1910), I, 56.

abilities and ambitions which fit much more readily the character of the revolutionary. Le Coq was a lawyer who had participated actively in government administration for fifteen years before the revolt; Marcel had had no connection with the royal administration. Le Coq was ambitious, aggressive, witty, a brilliant orator;¹ Marcel preferred to let others do his haranguing for him² and, while he may have been an aggressive merchant, he seems to have had no political ambitions. Le Coq, who had frequently come out second-best in political conflicts with more powerful courtiers, had everything to gain by the successful culmination of the movement; Marcel, already one of the wealthiest merchants of Paris, had nothing to win and everything to lose.

A brief résumé of Le Coq's career may clarify his position in the confused events of the middle 1350's. He was born, so our only source of information states, at Montdidier.³ His parents were bourgeois: Oudart le Coq and Jeanne de Ressons, originally of Orléans.⁴ His father, who had been in the royal service, was able to give his son a good education;⁵ as a matter of fact, Robert le Coq probably received as fine a training in civil and canon law as the times afforded. Certainly he was well read — if we may assume that he had familiarized himself with the books in his library; for, when this library was confiscated at Le Coq's death, the inventory showed it to contain a great many volumes for a fourteenth-century private collection: some seventy-six titles, mostly works on law.⁶ Though he became a cleric, we do not know when he took orders. Probably sometime in the 1330's he entered the Parlement at Paris and obtained the good will of Philip VI, who not only bestowed several prebends on him but also, on October 17, 1347, appointed him King's Advocate.⁷

¹ 'Acte d'accusation contre Robert le Coq, évêque de Laon,' ed. Douët d'Arcq, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes*, II (1840-1841), 365: '... le dit Robert est légiers et périlleux en paroles, et a très périlleuse et très malvaise langue, et de ce est il communement et publicquement renommez et diffamez. Et est tout notoire a touz ceulz avec qui il a repairez et conversé, et a touz ceulz qui ont cognoissance de lui.'

² For example, at a great mass meeting held on Jan. 12, 1358, at which the activities of the provost of the merchants were justified, Marcel did not speak at all. An echevin, Charles Toussac, was one of the orators, as was also a lawyer, Jean de Sainte-Haude. Marcel simply affirmed that their justifications were correct (*Grandes Chroniques*, I, 137-139).

³ *Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distribata* (Paris, 1751), IX, 548.

⁴ R. Delachenal, 'La bibliothèque d'un avocat du XIV^e siècle: Inventaire estimatif des livres de Robert le Coq,' *Nouvelle revue historique de droit français et étranger*, XI (1887), 527, n. 8.

⁵ 'Acte d'accusation contre Robert le Coq,' *loc. cit.*, p. 365: 'Son père a touz jours esté ou service de roys de France, et de ce a eu toute sa chevance et son estat, et soutenit le dit Robert aus écoles.'

⁶ Delachenal, 'La bibliothèque d'un avocat du XIV^e siècle,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 524-537.

⁷ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*: 'Et si tost comme il vint d'Orliens, il vint ou parlement du roy, ou quel il a gaaignié toute sa chevance et son estat, qui par avant estoit assez tenue et petite. Et y a long temps esté advocat du roy; et li donna le roy Philippe, que Dieux absoille, la provende de Paris, et li fist plusieurs autres biens.' Robert le Coq's name appears on a list of members of the Parlement for 1340-1341 (published by H. Lot, in *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes*, XXIV [1863], 120, n. 1; cited by Delachenal, *Histoire des avocats du Parlement de Paris* [Paris, 1885], p. 346). Delachenal has published (*ibid.*, pp. 419-420) the 'Lettres patentes par lesquelles Philippe de Valois prend pour avocat en Parlement Robert le Coq,' Oct. 17, 1347. The king did this because he was 'confians du grant sens, loyauté et souffissance de nostre bien amé, maistre Robert le Coc, advocat en nostre parlement. . . .'

For the next few years, Robert le Coq's energy and ability were rewarded by the continued favor of the king; even after the death of Philip VI in 1350, he continued in office under Philip's successor, John II. But while Le Coq courted the royal favor in hope of securing lucrative sinecures, he incurred the enmity of an influential group of royal councillors. This enmity apparently sprang from rivalry for the king's good will and favors; certainly it was aggravated by Robert le Coq's brutal wit and malicious tongue.

The group with whom Le Coq came into conflict included Pierre de la Forêt, chancellor,¹ Simon de Bucy, first president of the Parlement,² and Regnaut Chauveau, president of the Chambre des Comptes.³ Among several contemporary documents yielding evidence of the animosity between Robert le Coq and these men, the most important is the extremely prejudiced *Acte d'accusation contre Robert le Coq*, drawn up by Le Coq's enemies (or possibly by Simon de Bucy alone) after they had been forced from office by his efforts.⁴ While this document consists of nothing more than a series of invectives against Le Coq, it supplies, although one-sidedly, the most complete information we have concerning the disagreement among the parties.

Included in the *Acte* is a reference to an event of 1348: the murder of a clerk at Simon de Bucy's door by one of Le Coq's brothers. Bucy had made complaint to the king, but Le Coq's influence was such that he obtained letters of remission for his brother and thus incurred Bucy's enmity.⁵ We have more convincing evidence in respect to Le Coq's antagonism to La Forêt and Chauveau, who being churchmen were his rivals for ecclesiastical benefices. Possibly the fact that Le Coq had replaced La Forêt as King's Advocate was cause for enmity, but it is also likely that La Forêt's investiture as a bishop in 1350 provoked Robert le Coq's resentment. Perhaps, too, Le Coq yearned for the chancellorship,⁶ as his enemies alleged. The rivalry for a bishopric was equally acute between Le Coq and Chauveau, for although the latter had obtained the bishopric of Chalon (sur Saône) in 1351, he had apparently sought a transference to the bishopric of Laon.⁷

¹ See G. Daniel, *Histoire de France* (Paris, 1755), v, 554-556. Cf. *Gallia Christiana*, vii, 133.

² See Noël Valois, *Le Conseil du roi aux XIV^e, XV^e, et XVI^e siècles* (Paris, 1888), pp. 5-9.

³ See *Gallia Christiana*, ix, 892.

⁴ Cited p. 471, n. 1.

⁵ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 381-382. These letters of remission, if they exist, have apparently never been published.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 366: '... par especial, il a touz jours tendu à estre chancelier de France. Et pour cause a touz jours détrait et mesdit du chancelier; et de lonc temps a eu envie sur lui, et touz jours a voulu contendre de pareul en parlement. Mesmes quant ledit chancelier estoit advocat du roy, s'efforça il dé li supplanter son estat.' Robert le Coq had succeeded Pierre de la Forêt as *avocat* in 1347 (Delachenal, *Histoire des avocats*, p. 419).

⁷ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, p. 366: '... l'eveschié de Laon vacqua par la translation de messire Hugue Darcy faite a l'archeveschié de Reins; à la quelle avoir le dit R. tendi de tout son pouvoir. Et pour ce que le roy pria moult affectueusement pour maistre Regnaut Chauvau, lors évesque de Chalon, et pour ceste cause y envioia messire Symon de Bucy à Avignon, le dit Robert tint et cuida que sa promocion et son estat fussent retardez et empeschiez par le roy et par la messagerie du dit messire Symon.'

Robert le Coq, however, was finally made bishop of Laon on October 22, 1351.¹

In spite of the rivalry with this clique of John's councillors, Le Coq was able to keep on good terms with the king. He was a member of John II's council, accompanied him on his visit to Avignon in 1350, was appointed *maître des requêtes de l'hôtel du roi*, and participated in certain diplomatic missions.² For the years 1350-1355 we have few trustworthy sources on Le Coq's career, but since his name reoccurs as a member of the king's council in 1353, 1354, and 1355,³ we may assume that he was almost continuously active at court. Yet, his enemies' accusatory act involves the bishop of Laon in two major conspiracies of those years. The first led to the murder of Charles of Spain, long one of King John's favorites. This young man had come to be intensely hated by Charles, king of Navarre, known to history as 'the Bad.' The king of Navarre, who believed that Charles of Spain had robbed him of considerable properties, supervised the assassination of the favorite in January, 1354.⁴ The *Acte d'accusation* asserts that Robert le Coq had attached himself to Charles the Bad, poisoned his mind against the favorite and influenced him to commit the murder.⁵ It should be pointed out, however, that no other contemporary document links the bishop with Charles the Bad in this affair; furthermore, Le Coq was one of King John's emissaries to Charles when the differences between the two kings were resolved at Mantes, February 8, 1354.⁶

The second conspiracy concerned the dauphin Charles, and in this instance not only is Robert le Coq's implication doubtful, but the nature of the conspiracy itself is somewhat vague. What appears to have happened is this: in August, 1355, the Emperor Charles IV sent ambassadors to France to negotiate a treaty which was to contain a clause stating that the king's son should do homage to the emperor for the Dauphiné.⁷ Although John II refused to sign such a treaty, the

¹ Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi* (Münster, 1898), I, 308.

² 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, p. 365.

³ Robert le Coq is found on the council in Mar., 1351 (*Ordonnances des roys de France*, ed. F. D. Secousse [Paris, 1732], II, 397); Mar. 10, 1353 (T. Rymer [ed.], *Foedera, conventiones, litterae, et cujuscunque generis acta publica inter reges Angliae et alios* [2d ed.; London, 1830], III, 254); Aug., 1353 (*Ordonnances*, II, 529); Feb., 1354, as negotiator of treaty of Mantes (*Grandes Chroniques*, I, 39); Aug. 26, 1354 (*Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes*, XLIX [1888], 213); Dec. 31, 1354 (*ibid.*, LXXIII [1912], 463-464); Apr., 1355 (*Ordonnances*, III, 682); Jan. 13, 1356 (*ibid.*, III, 47).

⁴ 'Déposition de Friquet, gouverneur de Caen,' in F. D. Secousse (ed.), *Recueil de pièces servant de preuves aux mémoires sur les troubles excités en France par Charles II, roi de Navarre* (Paris, 1755), p. 52; *Chroniques de Froissart*, ed. S. Luce (Paris, 1873), IV, 130; *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 37-38.

⁵ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 366-367: '... il, qui savoit que le roy de navarre estoit grant et puissant, s'accointa de lui, et sema la descorde de lui et du connestable.'

⁶ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 39-40.

⁷ The diplomatic aims behind these negotiations have been admirably discussed by B. Mendl and F. Quicke, 'Les relations politiques entre l'empereur et le roi de France de 1355 à 1356,' *Revue belge*, VIII (1929), 469-512. Quicke pointed out that the letter of Aug. 26 (which is published, *ibid.*, pp. 503-509) was an initial proposal on the part of the emperor (p. 494; this corrects R. Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V* [Paris, 1909], I, 271). He then draws an excellent picture of the relations between France and the Empire which led to the negotiations (pp. 478-496). The purpose of Charles' policy was to hinder the French push into imperial territory. Whether the French government was following a set

seventeen-year-old dauphin was apparently so intrigued by the idea of the elaborate feudal ceremony that, unknown to his father, he began to plan for the trip, inviting Charles the Bad (with whom he had recently become congenial) and numerous of his followers to accompany him.¹ John discovered the dauphin's plans in December, circumvented them by making his son duke of Normandy, and allowed him to go off to Rouen to take possession.² Yet there may have been some vague plan of revolt behind the proposed journey to the emperor's court: untrustworthy sources imply a conspiracy to overthrow the king,³ and the *Acte d'accusation* affirms that Robert le Coq was behind the whole affair.⁴ On the other hand, Le Coq, who remained on the king's council all the while,⁵ was not so much as mentioned in the amnesty given those who had planned to accompany the dauphin.⁶

Obviously the purpose of these accusations was to discredit Le Coq by showing (1) that he had been an adviser and abetter of Charles the Bad, and (2) that he had allied with the dauphin against King John. Put forward by the enemies of Le Coq because they realized he had been the leading spirit in the movement which deposed them, these charges are curiously irrelevant in view of their authors' main grievance; for it had been Le Coq's influence with the central assembly of 1357, not his influence with Charles the Bad or the dauphin, that had swept his opponents from office. In 1357 Charles the Bad was in prison (as was John II) and the dauphin was Le Coq's enemy, not his friend. Thus Le Coq's possible involvement in the conspiracies is a matter of little moment when viewed in the light of subsequent events; for at the time of his greatest influence, the political setting was quite different from what it had been when the conspiracies were planned.

By 1355 the incapacity of the government to cope with the threat of English invasion had combined with the dangerous state of the finances to make the political situation in France more turbulent than ever. John II was finally reduced to calling upon the three estates and for the first time since 1351 he convoked, for November, 1355, a central assembly.⁷ This concession echoed the govern-

policy or not, it is true that encroachments had been made in the Dauphiné, in Savoie, in Provence, Franche-Comté, Lorraine, Verdun, and Cambrai. Charles IV was unable to oppose these threats with war, so he turned to diplomacy. In Aug., 1355, the emperor arbitrarily annulled certain French treaties in the Dauphiné and Franche-Comté; then, a few days later, he drew up the proposals of Aug. 26, 1355, which required withdrawal of the French from Verdun and Cambrai, and homage for the Dauphiné and the Franche-Comté. It is interesting to note that, while this pressure was placed on France because of the English menace, the French government did not concede until May, 1356, and then made no promises for Verdun or Cambrai.

¹ 'Déposition de Friquet,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

² *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 56-57.

³ 'Déposition de Friquet,' *loc. cit.*, p. 60.

⁴ '... par le moyen du roy de Navarre, s'acointa du duc, et commença à li mesdire du roy, et li blasmer son gouvernement et ses officiers; et comment il perdoit et gastoit tout le royaume. Si li conseilla qu'il alast pardevers son oncle l'empereur, et feist prendre touz les conseillers du roy' (*Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes*, II [1840-1841], 368).

⁵ Apr., 1355 (*Ordonnances*, III, 682); Jan. 13, 1356 (*ibid.*, p. 47).

⁶ Two letters of remission were issued, one on Jan. 6, 1356 (*Secousse, Preuves*, pp. 45-46) and the other on Jan. 23, 1356 (*ibid.*, pp. 47-49). The latter contains the names of those involved.

⁷ *Ordonnances*, III, 21; *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 55.

ment's desperation, for John and his councillors well knew that the delegates, exasperated with the fumbling administration, would not hesitate to make strong, and possibly revolutionary, demands. Nevertheless, there is little of importance to record concerning this assembly, which held its sessions from November 30 to December 28, 1355. Although Etienne Marcel was present as representative of the bourgeoisie, the assembly was dominated by the chancellor, Pierre de la Forêt.¹ Another meeting of the Estates occurred in March, 1356, but there is no record of either Etienne Marcel's or Robert le Coq's participation.²

Earlier that year the dauphin, newly made duke of Normandy, had departed from Paris for Rouen,³ where he was well received by Charles the Bad and other Norman nobles. The *Acte d'accusation* charges Robert le Coq with so terrifying the young prince that he fled from Paris for fear of his life,⁴ but according to better evidence John and his son were on perfectly good terms at the time.⁵ A few months later, when the king was near Beauvais, word came that Charles the Bad and the dauphin were at Mainneville in Normandy, apparently planning to attack the king.⁶ We are assured by the *Acte* that Robert le Coq, who was with King John, hurried to Mainneville with the warning that John 'knew all.⁷ Then followed a dramatic chase: the king hastened to Rouen, surprised a conference of Norman barons, beheaded four of them and took the king of Navarre a prisoner.⁸ Was the dauphin a conspirator against his father or was he a decoy?⁹ Either is a possibility

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³ Cf. *supra*, p. 474, n. 2.

⁴ '... [Robert le Coq] bouta tant ces paroles et autres semblables en la teste du duc, et tant l'espoventa, que le duc en eut telle paour, que au plus tost que il peut, il prist congîé du roy soubz umbre de aler prendre ses hommages en Normendie' (*loc. cit.*, p. 369).

⁵ He had received permission to go to Normandy some two weeks before he actually left (Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, I, 135, n. 4).

⁶ The only credible suggestion as to what this plot may have been comes from the deposition of Friquet (Secousse, *Preuves*, p. 60): 'Oultre ces choses, fu consgeu et empensé par ledit Roy de Navarre, que en un voiage que le Roy Jehan devoit faire en une abbaye que l'en dit Beaupré ou Grampré, en Normandie, pour lever de fons l'enfant au Conte d'Eu, il prendroit ou mettroit à mort le Roy Jehan; mais le Roy en fu avisé: si s'en garda.' It is true that this part of the deposition is an addition affixed to the statement by the secretary in 1385, and it may be an *ex post facto* justification for the king's action. On the other hand, the existence of such a plot fits in so well with the other known facts, and so satisfactorily explains the subsequent events, that I am inclined to give the document credence.

⁷ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, p. 369: '... le duc et le roy de Navarre estanz à Mainneville, il [Robert le Coq] manda à monseigneur le duc, que le roy avoit mettre et embuschier ès boys certaines gens d'arms pour faire murtrir li, et le roy de Navarre; dont il avint qu'il furent si espoventez, qu'il s'en foyrent de nuis pour la paour qu'il avoient, et s'en alèrent à Chastiau Gaillart.' Does this imply that John II had already heard of their plan to approach him at Beaupré, and had therefore set an ambush in self-defense?

⁸ Delachenal has described these events in as great detail as possible (*Histoire de Charles V*, I, 144-156).

⁹ That he was a decoy was the traditional Norman view, as registered in later Norman chronicles, e.g., *Chronique normande de Pierre Cochon*, ed. Charles de Beaurepaire (Rouen, 1870), pp. 82-83: 'Le roy Jehan avoit son filz ainsné, lequel estoit duc de Normandie, et lui dit: "Beau filz, voies des Normanz comme il mettent paine que le roy de Navarre soit duc pour les tenir en leur libertés. Si sachiez qu'il faut remedier en l'encontre, ou autrement nous serions destruis et em péril de perdre terre. Vous feres vos aprestez, et vous en yrés à Rouen, et feres savoir au roy de Navarre, au conte de Harecourt, au sire de Graville, au sire de Clère et à grant quantité d'autres seigneurs de Normandie qu'il soient à vous à Rouen, à certaine journée; et quant il seront venus à vous, vous leur ferés très

but the dauphin seems, nevertheless, to have retained his father's confidence.¹ What of Robert le Coq? Was he conspiring against the king, or had he been sent to warn the dauphin alone? He too seems to have retained the king's confidence; he was still a member of the council, and the *Acte d'accusation* is the only contemporary document in which he is charged with conspiracy.

By the summer of 1356 another assembly had met. Normandy was now in open revolt and the English in Guyenne, on hearing of the Norman uprising, gathered their forces for an invasion of French soil. The crisis came in September when King John's hosts were destroyed near Poitiers. The king found himself a prisoner of the English, who had killed or captured many of the foremost nobles of the land. Among the dead, incidentally, was Robert le Coq's enemy Regnaut Chauveau, president of the *Chambre des Comptes*.

The capture of John II left open the question of regency in France, for the dauphin was still a minor — eighteen years of age. It was clear that another assembly of the Estates would be necessary: the problem of an empty treasury remained unsolved and an early solution was rendered all the more difficult by the king's captivity. The obvious prerequisite for any effective rule of France was to secure control of both the dauphin and the central assembly; consequently both Le Coq and his enemies, headed by Chancellor Pierre de la Forêt, made rival efforts to attain this immediate goal. Le Coq, however, was denied control of the dauphin, for the youth had by this time come firmly under the influence of La Forêt, Bucy, and their faction.²

Control of the Estates was a different matter. At a great assembly meeting at Paris within a month after the battle of Poitiers, Pierre de la Forêt attempted to influence the delegates' deliberations in an address delivered at the opening session, on October 17.³ The assembly, however, proved to be more adamant than the young dauphin; its eight hundred delegates were loath to accept any

grant chière et grant signe d'amour, et puis les semondrés à dîner avec vous en vostre chastel de Rouen. . . . Et quant il seront tous assis et servis, si les tenés de parolles à table pour attendra ma venue." It is true that Cochon wrote a long while after these events and is often in error, but we may believe that he records an interpretation of the events that was current among Normans.

¹ Delachenal has published (*Histoire de Charles V*, I, 160, n. 1) a letter of John to the dauphin, who was at Pacy-sur-Eure in Normandy, dated May 5, 1356, in which the king assured him that the executions were not to be interpreted by the Normans as indicating lack of faith on the part of the king in respect to letters of remission, safe-conducts, and the like. The letter implies full confidence in the dauphin and his administration.

² The dauphin wrote the pope in Oct., 1356, recommending that Pierre de la Forêt be made a cardinal (document cited by Delachenal in *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 94, n. 3). The 'Acte d'accusation' also proves that the dauphin supported Forêt and Bucy against Le Coq; furthermore, they both accompanied him on his flight to Metz, in Dec. (Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, I, 277, n. 1). Another letter of the dauphin to the pope was answered by Innocent Nov. 9, 1356 (cited by N. Denifle, *La désolation des églises, monastères, et hôpitaux en France pendant la Guerre de cent ans* [Paris, 1899], II, 137, n. 3); the pope sympathized with the dauphin, who had apparently written him of the accusations against his father's councillors, especially against Pierre de la Forêt, 'ex fomite odii et rancore quorundam.'

³ 'Journal des états généraux réunis à Paris au mois d'octobre, 1356,' ed. Delachenal, in *Nouvelle revue historique de droit français et étranger*, XXIV (1900), 429-430. This journal is apparently either the official record or a summary of that record drawn up shortly after the meeting of the Estates was held. It is therefore a source of first importance.

dictation from the court. They requested and obtained permission to hold private deliberations; they elected a committee of about one-tenth their membership to facilitate discussion; they barred royal councillors from their meetings; and, in addition to presenting the traditional demands of earlier assemblies, they advocated that Charles the Bad be liberated, that certain councillors be dismissed (among them Pierre de la Forêt and Simon de Bucy), and that a council, advisory to the dauphin, be chosen from the Estates.¹

Robert le Coq, convinced of his inability to influence the dauphin, had concentrated his efforts on the assembly. According to his enemies it was he who had organized the committee meetings and had influenced them to propose the plan of a reformed council.² Exactly what part Le Coq played in the committee deliberations cannot be definitely ascertained, but in view of his subsequent role in the assembly, it appears that he must have been extremely active in the meetings — too active indeed for La Forêt and Bucy, who bitterly opposed the suggested reforms.³ It was undoubtedly their counsels which prevailed when the dauphin precipitately dismissed the assembly on November 2, 1356. This abrupt dismissal was in a sense an answer to the demands of the Estates, for the dauphin had promised them a reply on November 3; instead of keeping his promise, he told the delegates to go home and left Paris himself.⁴

On November 3, the three Estates met in spite of the fact that the meeting was technically illegal. They may have been convoked merely on the authority of Robert le Coq,⁵ who at this assembly delivered a speech which even today despite the inaccurate reports we have of it impresses us with its vigor and emotional appeal. The speech must have made a tremendous impression on the assembled delegates for it became the key-note for subsequent reform activity, it inspired the Grand Ordinance of 1357, and it placed Robert le Coq in the position of recognized leader of the reforming group. In the harangue he suggested that

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 430–436; *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 76–81.

² 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 370–371: 'Que malicieusement il pourchasa comment les bonnes gens des villes, et des chapitres, et du clergié et des nobles, esleussent certaines personnes, à qui il donnassent leur pouvoir. . . . Que pis est, il pourchassa tant, que il jurèrent ensemble que il seroient tout un et alliez ensemble en ce qu'il accorderoient et ordeneroient ensemble. . . .' We know at least thirty-four of the members of this committee of *élus*, for those Navarrese sympathizers are listed in the 'Acte d'accusation' (pp. 382–383). The list includes, among others, the following: (clergy) Jean de Craon and Robert le Coq, the archbishop of Lyons, the bishops of Langres, Evreux, and six other clergymen; (nobles) Jean de Conflans, marshal of Champagne, Jean de Piquigny and four others; (bourgeois) Etienne Marcel and sixteen other representatives from various *bonnes villes* of Languedoc. There can be no confusion of this list of *élus* with the membership of the proposed council elected from the Estates since the appearance of Noël Valois' 'Le grand conseil pendant la captivité de Jean le Bon,' in *Le Conseil du roi*, pp. 36–46.

³ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, p. 373: 'Et par ce appert clèrement que le gouvernement, l'autorité et la puissance de gouverner le royaume il [Robert le Coq] vouloit oster au roy et à monseigneur le duc, ou au moins leur en vouloit si petit laisser comme nient, car toute l'autorité de fait deust aus xxviii esleuz, et n'en eust le roy, ne le duc, fors nom tant seulement.' ⁴ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 88.

⁵ 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, p. 378: 'Le dit Coq, de son auctorité et à son pourchas, landemain, qui fu li jeudi après la Toussains [Nov. 3], fist assembler aus Cordeliers les personnes des trois estas.' Probably not all the delegates met on Nov. 3: 'Pluseurs des diz iii estaz qui encores estoient à Paris [*italics mine*] . . . assemblerent ou chapitre des diz freres Meneurs' (*Grandes Chroniques*, I, 88–89).

each of the delegates should take copies of the decisions of the committee and report them at home. It is likely that the documents published under the title *Journal des états* is one of these records; in it, the summary of Le Coq's speech runs to almost twenty octavo pages.¹

Robert le Coq apparently summed up the events leading to the Estates' convocation, analyzed the reforms which had been suggested by the committee, and delivered a glowing but bitter denunciation of the management of the government by John's councillors. The reforms which the bishop of Laon suggested must be summarized briefly in order to show how closely he anticipated the Grand Ordinance, on which he was to deliver another oration just four months later. He referred to the newly proposed impost; he spoke on the necessity of freeing the king of Navarre; and he pointed out the need for a sound coinage. He justified at length not only the plan for a new Grand Council, which would virtually control the state, but also proposed the formation of another council to manage exclusively military affairs. Turning to reforms, he advocated limiting the chancellor strictly to the duties of his office (a blow at his enemy Pierre de la Forêt), reforming all the administrative chambers, reducing household expenditures, and prohibiting the right of *prisage*. He also suggested the appointment of reformers-general who should investigate administrative corruption.

Equally important, however, was that part of his address, purely rhetorical, wherein he accused his enemies in the king's council. It was here that Robert le Coq presented his own case and it was here that he rose to the highest flights of eloquence. He denied the reports that the Estates wished to harm the dauphin or that they had any objective other than to help him. He elaborated on the desperate plight of the kingdom, its weakness, its faulty government, its helplessness before its enemies. The blame he laid squarely on the shoulders of the king's negligent councillors, lazy rascals who came late to work and spent more of their time at dinner than at the council table. He fulminated against the delays, the procrastination, the inefficiency of the financial administration, the gross negligence and stupidity in formulating monetary policies. Then he deftly turned to praise the members of the Estates; they were the most capable and honorable men in France and what they did was done for the good of the kingdom.²

To what extent the ideas in this harangue were Robert le Coq's, and how far they were simply a summary of the delegates' previous deliberations, is difficult to determine. Was Le Coq truly in sympathy with the spirit of the Estates, or did he dissemble so perfectly for his own ends as to convince his hearers that he

¹ 'Journal des états,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 440-459. Cf. also *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 89; 'Acte d'accusation,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 378-380.

² 'Journal des états,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 446-453. One should compare the account in the 'Acte d'accusation' (*loc. cit.*, pp. 378-380), wherein Robert le Coq is accused of using his eloquence to stir up the people against the king to the extent of suggesting deposition and threatening the Estates that, having gone thus far, they were doomed unless they could obtain the upper hand. This note was probably sounded in Le Coq's speech, but the more conservative account is more likely to be accurate.

was sincere? In any case he must have aroused a tremendous enthusiasm, for within four months the Estates had forced the dauphin to grant the reforms. True, the general scarcity of money, the English invasions, the Black Death, the extraordinary imposts, the defeat at Poitiers — all these played their part in setting the stage, but no vigorous reaction could have occurred unless a leader, with a definite program, had come to the fore. In my judgment, Robert le Coq, not Etienne Marcel, became that leader when he sounded the rallying cry in his great speech of November 3, 1356. Marcel was later thrust into the leadership of the Parisian mob; but he was not the type of man to inspire popular enthusiasm and at no time did he supersede Robert le Coq as director of the reforming movement.¹

It must also be remembered that the accused councillors considered Le Coq's denunciations important enough to be answered with a long rebuttal: the often-cited *Acte d'accusation contre Robert le Coq*.² In the 'response' at the end of the ninety-one accusatory articles an attempt is made to reply to Le Coq's speech.³ The councillors argue that the war was managed as well as possible and that the defeat at Poitiers, deplorable though it may have been, was not due to lack of valor; they explained the abuses in the administration of justice by the emergency created by the war; in respect to the household expenses, the royal gifts, and the abuses in fines and pardons, they asserted that they had done their best to stop corruption but had been unable to overcome the importunity of certain individuals who abused the king's good nature. In other words, they admitted the justice of Le Coq's accusations and their own inability to cope with the problems.

Nevertheless, after the Estates had been dismissed, Le Coq, who had no military support whatsoever, could only stand by and trust that the ferment would begin to work. The dauphin, believing that his action had disposed of the Estates' embarrassing demands, turned his attention to what he seems to have regarded as a more pressing matter: his long-postponed investment with the Dauphiné by his uncle, Emperor Charles IV, who was to meet the German Diet

¹ The term 'reforming,' rather than 'revolutionary,' is used advisedly. Modern scholars have tended to minimize the revolutionary ambitions of the Estates. L. Balas (*Une tentative de gouvernement représentatif; les Etats de 1356-1358* [Paris, 1928], p. 67) suggested that the project of Le Coq probably seemed only a simple reform necessitated by the bad administration and the inexperience of the dauphin. Geneviève d'Harcourt ('Une tentative de réforme de l'état au XIV^e siècle,' *Annales du droit et des sciences sociales*, II-III [1934], 15-44) in an excellent summary of the work of the Estates of October, 1356, has enlarged on the non-revolutionary aspects of this movement. She points out that the Estates presumably anticipated no difficulties (p. 42): 'Il s'agissait de gagner le duc. C'était le point capital, mais, chose curieuse, les Etats, au début, ne paraissent pas avoir doute du succès. La vérité, la justesse de leurs arguments leur paraissent si frappantes qu'elles devaient s'imposer à tout esprit non prévenu et non perversi. Un simple discours, et la cause était gagnée.'

² The editor of the 'Acte d'accusation,' Douët-d'Arcq, erroneously assumed that it had been redacted at the Estates of Compiègne, in May, 1358 (*loc. cit.*, pp. 363-364). Noël Valois (*Le Conseil du roi*, p. 44, n. 4) first suggested an earlier date, with which Delachenal (*Histoire de Charles V*, I, 263, n. 3) agrees. Balas also believes it to have been written immediately after Nov. 3, 1356 (*loc. cit.*, pp. 79-81).

³ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 380-382.

at Metz on Christmas Day.¹ The dauphin, with La Forêt, Bucy, and a large retinue, departed for Metz in December,² but not before an edict changing the mint ratio of silver coins had been drawn up.³ This harmless-appearing edict was put into effect on December 10,⁴ six days after the dauphin had left the city. Publication of the edict was an immediate cause of rioting throughout Paris. The ferment had begun to work. In these riots Le Coq had no part; it was Etienne Marcel, as provost of the merchants, who presented the people's demands to the government and threatened violence unless the edict was withdrawn. But no action could be taken until January 14, 1357, when the dauphin returned to Paris. He found the city preparing to arm in an effort to secure redress of its grievances.⁵

To the prince Marcel repeated his demands: the edict must be repealed and the Estates recalled or the gilds would go on strike and the citizens take up arms.⁶ The dauphin had nowhere to turn; he had no money to defray his expenses, he had no royal troops (they had been broken and scattered after Poitiers), and his followers, sensing the changing wind, drifted away: Pierre de la Forêt and Simon de Bucy went to Bordeaux;⁷ others who had been accused by Le Coq disappeared; some who remained in Paris were imprisoned.⁸ In this situation, there was nothing for the dauphin but to consent to the Parisians' demands and he permitted a central assembly to be convoked for February 5.⁹

Once again the Estates met, but this time they did not dissolve until they had drawn up an imposing document, the Grand Ordinance of 1357. Robert le Coq was once more in the ascendant, for with his enemies dispersed he was undisputed leader of the First Estate. Etienne Marcel, it is true, figured as head of the Parisian delegation; but in such matters as the formulation of ideas and the use of argument and expostulation he could in no wise compare with the churchman-courtier Le Coq, who possessed the qualifications of a legist and was a brilliant orator. Le Coq, however, had no force at his disposal except such pressure as the

¹ Some notice has already been given to the proposed agreement between Charles IV and John II in the autumn of 1355, as influencing the dauphin's projected flight with certain members of the Norman party. On Jan. 6, 1356, John II had written to Charles IV, refusing the emperor's offer of a treaty of amity in return for the cession of Verdun, Cambrai, etc., homage on the part of the duke of Normandy for the Dauphiné, and homage on the part of Philippe de Rouvres for the Franche-Comté. Several months later, in May, 1356, a treaty was concluded between France and the Empire in which the claims to Cambrai were disregarded but which stated that the dauphin should do homage for the Dauphiné in person. The details of the negotiations have been analyzed convincingly by Quicke, 'Les relations politiques entre l'empereur et le roi de France,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 497-500. The text of the treaty of May, 1356, has been published, *ibid.*, pp. 510-512.

² Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, I, 268.

³ *Ordonnances*, III, 87-88.

⁴ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 92.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-94.

⁶ On Jan. 19, 1357, the provost of the merchants, after demanding that the dauphin stop the circulation of the new money, made two threats: (1) the gilds would cease operation, and (2) the citizens of Paris would arm (*ibid.*, p. 96): 'Furent si esmeuz par toute la dicte ville que ilz furent cesser tous menestereux d'ouvrer; et fist commander le dit prevost par toute la dicte ville que chascun s'armast.'

⁷ Rymer, *Foedera*, III, Pt. I, 348. Pierre de la Forêt accompanied John when the king went to England in June (*Grandes Chroniques*, I, 110-111).

⁸ See Valois, *Le Conseil du roi*, p. 27.

⁹ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 99.

Estates could exert; after the Estates had been dismissed the previous November he was powerless. But Etienne Marcel, provost of the merchants, placed in a position of authority over a bustling city of two hundred thousand, could bring enough pressure to bear on the dauphin to force the revocation of an ordinance and the convocation of the Estates. It is not likely, however, that Marcel either dominated the Estates or suggested the reforms which they considered.

For almost a month the Estates deliberated at Paris. By March 3, 1357, they had drawn up the sixty-one articles of the Grand Ordinance;¹ and at the closing session, Robert le Coq delivered an oration in the Grand' Chambre of the Parlement. He discussed fully the reforms — financial, administrative, judicial, and military — which were contemplated.²

While many of these reforms appeared idealistic and hopelessly impractical, a few went into effect immediately. Twenty-two government officials were deposed from office at once.³ Among these we find Pierre de la Forêt and Simon de Bucy; the others were mostly lawyers of the Parlement and financiers of the Chambre des Comptes. Because of the predominantly bourgeois origin of these men, the old view that the dismissals marked a bourgeois revolt against the nobility would appear groundless;⁴ nor is it true that the persons who were dismissed composed all of the dauphin's council.⁵ The idea of a council chosen from among the delegates to the assembly, proposed by Le Coq in November, disappeared; several men elected from the Estates participated in the dauphin's council,⁶ but they probably comprised a minority in the council in spite of the predominant influence of Robert le Coq. Other attempts to carry out the measures of the Ordinance included the formation of an *aide*-collecting administration,⁷ and the establishment of a reforming commission.⁸

For six months — from March to August, 1357 — the bishop of Laon remained supreme in the dauphin's council. King John, it is true, having concluded a truce with the English, sent word to Paris that neither the new subsidy voted by the Estates should be raised nor should the Estates meet again. But such an outcry arose among the citizenry of Paris that the dauphin, threatened once more by Robert le Coq and Etienne Marcel, was forced to disregard his father's communication and to announce that the Estates should meet again as planned.⁹ The prince acceded, according to the extremely reliable and pro-royal *Grandes Chroniques*, because of 'the counsel or constraint of the aforesaid three Estates, that is to say of the said bishop of Laon, who was the principal leader of the said three

¹ *Ordonnances*, III, 124-146. See G. Picot, *Histoire des Etats généraux* (Paris, 1872), I, 62-183.

² *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 101-105.

³ Article 41 (*Ordonnances*, III, 140).

⁴ Twelve of the twenty-two were of bourgeois extraction; six were clergymen whose family background is unknown. None was a member of the higher nobility.

⁵ Only four were regular members of the Grand Council. Seven or eight at most were councillors at one time or another.

⁶ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 106.

⁷ *Ordonnances*, IV, 183-185.

⁸ Order establishing the powers of the *réformateurs-généraux*, Mar. 8, 1357 (Delachenal [ed.], *Grandes Chroniques*, III, 76-81).

⁹ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 108-109.

Estates, of the provost of the merchants, and of several others.¹ Robert le Coq had been able to retain control. In April he was granted an annuity by the dauphin.²

But the administration of the impost was a miserable failure,³ and when the central assembly of July, 1357, admitted its inability to cope with the financial situation,⁴ the dauphin and his party lost no time in asserting themselves. About the middle of August the dauphin let it be known to Etienne Marcel and the other leaders of the Parisians that henceforth they were to cease interfering in the government. Robert le Coq retired to his bishopric in disgrace. Toward the end of August it appeared as if the efforts of the Estates had collapsed.⁵ The old officials returned to office and the commissions of the reformers appear to have terminated sometime in the autumn of 1357.⁶ The great plans of Robert le Coq, Etienne Marcel, and their supporters had gone up in smoke; the royalist government seemed to be completely asserted.

Still, loyalist predominance was short lived, for the dauphin like the Estates was unable to raise money.⁷ The two factions had arrived at a stalemate, each being powerless through lack of funds to force a decision. The dauphin, soon realizing that the government could not function under the old machinery, recalled Robert le Coq in October and granted permission for a new assembly to be convoked.⁸

The meeting of this assembly, in November, 1357, coincided with a spectacular and significant event, the escape of Charles the Bad from his prison in Arleux. Etienne Marcel and Robert le Coq have been accused of instigating the conspiracy which led to the king of Navarre's flight,⁹ but while unquestionably they hailed the accomplished fact, it is difficult to establish positively that they knew

¹ *Ibid.*

² Document dated Apr., 1357, ed. Luce, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes*, XXI (1860), 85-86.

³ See E.-G. Ledos, 'L'imposition d'Auvergne en janvier, 1357,' *Mélanges Julien Havet* (Paris, 1895) pp. 429-450; cf. G. Guigue, *Les Tard-venus en Lyonnais, Forez, et Beaujolais, 1356-1369* (Lyon, 1886), pp. 246-253; cf. also E. Perroy, 'La fiscalité royale en Beaujolais aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles,' *Moyen âge*, XXIX (1928), 9-10. A later ordinance of Feb., 1358 (published by P. Viollet, *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, XXXIV [1895], 284, Article 15), refers to this condition: '... du subside ... octroïé ... ou dit mois de mars l'an mil trois cens cinquante six [1357, n. st.], aucuns ont païé pour quatre mois, c'est assavoir pour les mois de mars, avril, may et juing et les autres n'ont riens ou petit païé. ...' ⁴ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 111. ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-113.

⁶ Letters of the dauphin of Aug. 28, 1357 (in Valois, *Conseil du roi*, p. 60, nn. 2-5) refer to the duties of the reformers as discharged: 'commissione seu potestate dictorum reformatum functa ...' and 'officio dictorum reformatum functo. ...' However, the ordinance giving powers to the reformers was copied as late as Sept., 1357 (see the document as published by Delachenal, *Grandes Chroniques*, III, 76-81).

⁷ The *Grandes Chroniques* suggest this (I, 115): 'Et pendant la dicte journée [before the Estates met on Nov. 7, 1357] fu monseigneur le duc si mené, que il n'avoit denier de cheavance, pour quoy il convenoit que il feist tout ce que les dessus diz de Paris vouloient.' ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 114, n. 4.

⁹ *Chronographia regum Francorum*, ed. H. Moranvillé (Paris, 1893), II, 266: 'Tunc temporis prepositus merchatorum et illi de tribus statibus fecerunt liberari regem Navarre. ...' *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, ed. J. Viard and E. Déprez (Paris, 1905), II, 252: 'Avint que ung chevalier nommé messire Jehan de Pinquegnay et aultres vinrent soubz le confort du prevost des marchans et du conseil des bonnes villes au chastel, où le roy de Navarre estoit; si le prirent en prison et menerent a Paris. ...'

of the plans for the king's escape.¹ Le Coq, however, did prevail upon the dauphin to allow Charles to come to Paris under safe-conduct.²

Robert le Coq had once again obtained a position of ascendancy, precarious though it was. For the next four months he remained the dominant figure in the dauphin's council, virtually ruler of France, while about him swirled a number of unpredictable currents which were eventually to undermine his predominance. The prosaic *Grandes Chroniques* leave no doubt of Le Coq's influence: 'And then in the council of monseigneur the duke, the principal master and sovereign was the bishop of Laon, who had entirely procured and accomplished the things written above [the issuance of Charles the Bad's safe-conduct], by the power and aid of the provost of the merchants and of ten or twelve of the town of Paris.'³ Not only did the bishop enable Charles the Bad to come to Paris, but he obtained for him a temporary treaty recognizing his claims to confiscated territories.⁴ In the words of the *Grandes Chroniques*: 'This the said bishop [of Laon] had ordered, so that all that the said king [of Navarre] required was granted to him by the said monseigneur the duke, who, by constraint, was unable to refuse anything that that bishop wished.'⁵ Charles the Bad now retired from Paris and resided quietly in Normandy, to the relief of the dauphin and to the disgust of the belligerent Parisians. Robert le Coq remained in contact with both factions:

Continually the said bishop of Laon, by whom those of Paris were principally counselled and governed, and who was devoted to the king of Navarre, was principal councillor to the said duke; and everything was done by him and his orders, at which many people were amazed, and it was said that he was the double-bitted ax (*besaigüé*) which cuts at both ends. And truly it was said that the bishop made known to the king all that was done in the council of monseigneur the duke.⁶

In February Le Coq forced the dauphin to recommend him for a cardinal's hat.⁷

But Paris was in ferment. The vague fears which were entertained led eventually to panic, and the collapse of royal authority emboldened the mob. There was cause enough for concern. Countless troops of the 'companies' were roaming the countryside; the roads to the south were cut off; merchant caravans had been seized and sacked. Money was scarce and becoming scarcer, food was hard to obtain, and the city was poorly protected.⁸ As all these troubles appeared to the Parisians to be due to the mismanagement of the government, their indignation centered on the dauphin and his royal advisers. On February 22, 1358, their wrath reached a point beyond control: an inflamed mob stormed the royal palace and murdered two of the dauphin's noble advisers, Robert de Clermont, marshal

¹ The *Grandes Chroniques* do not suggest their participation, and a letter of justification by Piquigny, who engineered the escape, does not involve them (ed. Guénon, *Bulletin historique et philologique du comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques*, xvi [1897], 248-249).

² *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 117-118.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-126. Terms of the treaty, drawn up Dec. 13, 1357, in Secousse, *Preuves*, pp. 65-67.

⁵ I, 123.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 129

⁷ Around Feb. 2, 1358, Jean d'Aubevillier, dit Toussaint, was sent to Avignon to negotiate for a Cardinal's hat for the bishop of Laon (Secousse, *Preuves*, p. 130).

⁸ Denifle, *op. cit.*, II, 136-145, 179-211, 224-229.

of Normandy, and Jean de Conflans, marshal of Champagne.¹

These murders mark the beginning of a new phase in the revolt, just as they mark a turning point in the careers of Robert le Coq and Etienne Marcel. That either of the two men had planned or advised the murders remains doubtful; the likelihood is that the murders were unpremeditated acts of mob violence. Be that as it may, the leaders were confronted with the problem of repudiating or condoning assassination, knowing full well that they might precipitate a reaction on the part of the nobility, whose potential strength could hardly be estimated. Both Le Coq and Marcel, however, accepted the responsibility for the murders, obtained a half-hearted ratification from the Estates, and together with Charles the Bad, who returned to the capital at once, pushed their advantage to the utmost.² The king of Navarre was granted an indemnity and land,³ and in the course of the negotiations an agreement was reached whereby the nobles of Upper Normandy, Vermandois, and the Beauvaisis were to be convoked for an assembly at Senlis on March 25, 1358.⁴ Knowing as we do that a reaction among the nobles against Marcel and Le Coq set in soon after the assembly at Senlis, we may well wonder why the bishop of Laon and the king of Navarre advocated an assembly at all. Presumably it was because they realized that an impost could not be raised with the consent only of the clergy and bourgeoisie; and probably they overestimated the influence they had with the nobility. One of the first indications of reaction against Le Coq and Marcel was the defection of Le Bègue de Villiers, Parisian captain of the guard. Under pressure of Robert le Coq the dauphin had ordered Le Bègue to take over the fortresses around Paris;⁵ but in March Le Bègue repudiated the Parisians in favor of the dauphin and seized Corbeil,⁶ which, located strategically on the Seine south of Paris, partially controlled the transit of foodstuffs down the river to the capital.

Later in the month, the dauphin left Paris to attend several local assemblies⁷ and he was agreeably surprised to find the nobles generally favorable to his cause.⁸ Paris he left to Etienne Marcel, who busied himself with the defense of the city and impractical schemes of alliance with other towns.⁹ But now that he

¹ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 148; *Chroniques de Jean le Bel*, II, 251-252; *Chronique de Froissart* (ed. Luce), v, 96-97. The best modern narrative account of these dramatic events is Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, I, 354-355.

² *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 164-162.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 156; Secousse, *Preuves*, pp. 73-76.

⁴ Order of the dauphin, Mar. 12, 1358, published by A. Coville, *Les Etats de Normandie* (Paris, 1894), pp. 365-366.

⁵ Order published by Luce, *Histoire de Bertrand du Guesclin* (Paris, 1896), p. 533. The bishop of Laon is mentioned as a member of the council.

⁶ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 163; *Chronographia regum Francorum*, II, 266.

⁷ The suggestion in the *Chronique normande* (p. 125) that the dauphin escaped from Paris by night in a boat is undoubtedly erroneous. The fact that he left Paris to attend the assembly of the nobles was well known, and if the Parisians regretted his departure, they nevertheless expected him to be under the close surveillance of Robert le Coq and the king of Navarre.

⁸ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 163-167.

⁹ See the *Chronique de Jean de Venette*, ed. H. Guéraud (Continuation of the *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis* [Paris, 1843], II, 256-258). Cf. 'Documents nouveaux sur Etienne Marcel,' ed. S. Luce, *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris*, VI (1879), 305-324. On Marcel's alliance schemes, see his letter of July 11, 1358, to the town of Ypres (ed. Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, II, 417).

had rid himself of Marcel's close surveillance and was once more free to act, the dauphin bent every effort to reduce the city of Paris from the outside; and with this end in view he began to blockade the city.¹ He also wished to come to an understanding with the king of Navarre; and third, he aimed to secure domination of the Estates. As to Robert le Coq's activity during this significant month of April, 1358, we have no information; while he may have retained some power because of his continuing influence with the king of Navarre, it is patent that without the support of Marcel and the Parisian mob his position was precarious. On May 3, 1358, the dauphin and Charles the Bad held a meeting which resulted in the complete breakdown of their amicable relations.² Charles had been unable to receive back his confiscated lands because the chatelains had refused to turn them over; the dauphin, on the other hand, either would not or could not bring about their restoration. Accordingly, the king of Navarre decided to take the properties by force and proceeded to ally with the English and with the revolting Parisians.³

Robert le Coq now found himself gravely compromised, in that he was the professed leader of factions openly at war with the dauphin. He tried, nevertheless, to maintain his position in the council, but during the assembly at Compiègne, early in May, 1358, he was threatened by several noblemen and forced to flee to Saint Denis, where he joined the king of Navarre.⁴ Probably influenced by these developments, some writers speak of the reactionary aspects of the Compiègne Estates and their loyalty to the dauphin.⁵ It should be noted, however, that there is no mention of the Estates repudiating the bishop; the account says simply that his life was threatened by certain nobles. It is clear that once the fear of Charles the Bad's vengenance had been removed, the dauphin's supporters lost no time in removing Le Coq from his influential position in the council; but this event need not be associated with the Estates at all.

Thereafter Robert le Coq openly espoused the cause of Charles the Bad against the dauphin. But with the loss of his greatest weapon, the support of the assembly of the Estates, he had ceased to be an influential figure on the political scene. He now becomes a petty intriguer and only occasionally is mentioned in the chronicles of the period. As this study is intended to be primarily a political biography

¹ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 168-170.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175: 'En celui temps, l'evesque de Laon, qui estoit alez à l'assemblée de Compiègne, fu en peril d'estre vilenez par plusieurs nobles hommes qui là estoient avecques le dit regent. Et convint que il s'en partist celement; et ala a Saint-Denys en France.'

⁵ See, for instance, Perrens, *Etienne Marcel*, pp. 215-217. The unwarranted significance given by Perrens and others to Le Coq's flight has largely derived from the belief that the *Acte d'accusation contre Robert le Coq* was drawn up at the Estates of Compiègne, as the original editor, Douët-d'Arcq, suggested (*loc. cit.*, II [1840-41], 364). As it is now generally conceded that the document was written much earlier, its significance as evidence concerning the 'reaction' at Compiègne must be discounted. A statement in the *Chronique de Jean de Venette* (II, 254) has often been cited to support the view that representatives of the Estates rallied behind the duke and advised him to attack Paris. But this passage, which speaks only of the nobles, more likely refers to an earlier local assembly and not to the Compiègne Estates at all. At best it is vague compared with the precise information in the ordinance of May 14 (*Ordonnances*, III, 221-222). From the ordinance itself we gather that the delegates did not heartily support the dauphin, but actually revived the reforming ideas of the earlier assemblies. Cf. Balas, *Une tentative de gouvernement représentatif*, pp. 169-174.

of Le Coq, it is unnecessary to discuss in detail the events that took place after his downfall. The king of Navarre attempted to work out an alliance with the Parisians during June and July, 1358, and Robert le Coq is known to have participated in the secret discussions between Etienne Marcel and the king of Navarre.¹ But Marcel, now involved in a war of his own, was no longer under the influence of Le Coq as he had been at the time the Grand Ordinance was promulgated.

Charles the Bad's negotiations with the Parisians were impeded by mutual suspicion and internal dissension in Paris. In the end, the Parisians turned against him, and, suspecting Marcel's treachery, they turned against the provost of the merchants as well. On July 31, 1358, Marcel was murdered. Shortly afterward the dauphin returned to Paris and took control of the government.² Charles the Bad left the city along with Robert le Coq and continued the war in open alliance with the English.³

Robert le Coq's fortunes never improved. A royal order of August 11, 1358, reads: 'As Robert le Coq, bishop of Laon, has been and is rebellious and disobedient to the king, to us, and to the kingdom, and [as he] has given and gives counsel, comfort and aid to its enemies and to its rebels . . . all the temporality which he holds . . . and all properties . . . are confiscated.' Le Coq was never able to reclaim his possessions, and it is doubtful if he ever returned to Laon at all. Some writers have thought that he tried to turn Laon over to the Navarrese after the fall of Paris, but it is more likely that Froissart, who relates the story, has misread his sources.⁴ Probably a reaction in Laon, similar to the one in Paris, resulted

¹ I have seen only one reference to Robert le Coq in the chronicled events between the Compiègne Estates (May, 1358) and the death of Marcel (July, 1358). This reference is in the *Chronique de Jean le Bel* (II, 265-266) and concerns the period after negotiations with the dauphin on July 20, 1358: 'Et estoient souvent ensemble en secret conseil ledit roy [de Navarre] et l'evesque de Laon, et le prevost des marchans, et ne sçavoit on qu'ilz conseilloyent si couvertement. . . .' See also the letters of remission to Jean de Saint-Leu, Oct., 1358 (Secousse, *Preuves*, pp. 101-102) which state that Robert le Coq, Jean de Picquigny, Robert de Corbie, and Etienne Marcel used to meet together at the convent of St Genevieve in Paris. ² *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 206-210.

³ A treaty between Charles the Bad's representatives and those of Edward III was signed on August 1, 1358 (published by E. Déprez, 'Une conférence Anglo-Navarraise en 1358,' *Revue historique*, xcix [1908], 36-38; Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, II, 421-423; also in Rymer, *Foedera*, III, Pt. I, 228) but the place at which the treaty was signed is not given. Although the locality has generally been identified as Saint-Denis (see Luce, 'Negotiations des Anglais avec le roi de Navarre pendant la révolution parisienne de 1358,' *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris*, I [1874], 117-119), the arguments of Delachenal (*Histoire de Charles V*, II, 5-7) that the treaty was signed somewhere in Normandy are convincing.

⁴ 'Comme Robert le Cocq, evesque de Laon, ait esté et soit rébelle et desobeissant à Monsieur, a nous, et au Royaume, et aus ennemis et rébelles d'icelui ait presté et preste conseil, confort et aide de tout son povoir . . . tout la temporalité qu'il tient . . . et touz les biens . . . sont confisquez' (Secousse, *Preuves*, pp. 85-86). Cf. Delachenal, 'La bibliothèque d'un avocat du XIV^e siècle,' *Nouvelle revue historique de droit français et étranger*, XI [1887], 531.

⁵ Ed. Luce, v, 130: 'Ossi assés tost après, par cas sannable, en furent trahinet et justiciet en la bonne cité de Laon six des plus grans bourgeois de la ville. Et, se li evesques dou lieu eüst esté tenus, mal pour lui, car il en fu accusés, et depuis ne s'en peut il escuser; mès il se parti adonc secretement, car il eut amis en voie qui li noncièrent ceste avenue: si se trest tantost par devers le roy de Navarre à Melun sus Sainne, qui le reçut liement.'

in the apprehension of those ringleaders who had supported the bishop and the king of Navarre.¹

The revolt was now virtually at an end. The dauphin was at Paris, and the former government re-established. The old councillors who were still living returned, among them Simon de Bucy and Pierre de la Forêt. Bucy resumed office in April, 1359, and continued as an active councillor until his death in 1369.² Pierre de la Forêt died of the plague, near Avignon, in July, 1361.³ But the king of Navarre continued to wage war until the autumn of 1359 when both parties, worn out with the struggle, agreed to negotiate. The treaty of peace, signed at Pontoise on August 21, 1359, was ratified at Paris on September 1 of the same year. The dauphin made it known that Robert le Coq and certain others were not to be allowed to return to Paris; otherwise the Navarrese faction was completely reconciled with the dauphin and the Parisians.⁴

Arrangements were now made for the banishment of Robert le Coq. His translation was approved by the pope in 1359,⁵ and the conditions of his exile were set forth at large in the separate peace made by Charles the Bad with King John at Saint Denis on December 12, 1360: 'in respect to the bishop of Laon, he will [continue to] enjoy the spiritualities, and will be translated outside the kingdom of France.'⁶ Robert le Coq was transferred to the bishopric of Calahorra on the Navarrese frontier of Castile, where he lived in retirement until his death in 1372.⁷ Such was the insignificant end of a man who had stood on the threshold of greatness.

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¹ We know that six men were executed at Laon either in Sept. or Oct., 1358, for participation in this movement. Luce has supplied from MS documents of Oct., 1358, the names of some of the ringleaders (*ibid.*, p. xl, n. 4). A letter of remission for Jean Boulengier, who participated (cited by Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, II, 20, n. 7), states that 'il avoit enduit le commun à prendre les chaperons de ceulx de Paris,' and that he had wished to turn over Laon to the troops of Robert le Coq and the king of Navarre. The reference to the revolt at Paris would seem to indicate that the Laon uprising was prior to August, 1358. Froissart's chief source for this period, Jean le Bel, while mentioning the event, does not involve Le Coq (*Chronique*, II, 271-272); nor does Jean de Noyal, a resident of Laon, in his contemporary 'Miroir historial' (published by A. Molinier in *Annuaire-bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris*, XX [1883], 257-258). He states that the men were executed through suspicion of being 'de la partie à l'evesque Robert Lecoq et au roy de Navarre.'

² E. Maugis, *Histoire du Parlement de Paris* (Paris, 1916), III, 1, 17.

³ *Gallia Christiana*, XI, 80.

⁴ *Grandes Chroniques*, I, 244-245.

⁵ Letter of Innocent VI to Charles the Bad, Oct. 21, 1359, in Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, II, 258, n. 4.

⁶ Secousse, *Preuves*, p. 173: 'Et quant est de l'Evesque de Laon, il joira de l'espiritualitez, et sera translatez hors du Royaume de France.'

⁷ Eubel, *Hierarchia*, I, 161. Cf. *Gallia Christiana*, IX, 549, which gives the date of his death as 1368.

